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THESIS

THE POLISH ARMED FORCES:
WARSAW PACT RELIABILITY IN QUESTION

by

Michael Edward Duffy

December 1983

Thesis Advisor:

R. Looney

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The Polish Armed Forces:
Warsaw Pact Reliability in Question

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

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ABSTRACT

The December 1981 imposition of martial law in Poland and its lifting in 1983 have been indicative of the turmoil that has existed in Poland over the last few years. As the largest member geographically and demographically of the Warsaw Pact, the domestic unrest has placed the reliability of the Polish armed forces as Warsaw Pact members in question.

This thesis concludes that the Polish armed forces can be considered reliable members of the Warsaw Pact in foreseeable circumstances, despite some qualifications. This conclusion is reached through a review of the postwar history of the Polish armed forces and an analysis of other pertinent factors, including the burden of governing and the economy's effect on the armed forces. Various other issues favoring and opposing reliability are also analyzed.

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I. INTRODUCTION

As the present military regime has enacted an apparent lifting of martial law and at the same time Lech Walesa and his followers attempt to express dissatisfaction with social conditions, the question of the reliability of the Polish Armed Forces as members of the Soviet directed Warsaw Pact inevitably arises.

The reliability of the Polish Armed Forces is of inestimable importance to the Soviet Union. The Polish armed forces are the most significant part of the Northern Tier forces in the Warsaw Pact. Poland, the largest geographically and demographically of the non-Soviet Warsaw Pact members, and situated astride the traditional invasion route from the West to Russia has by its position and size been considered of vital importance to Russian security both by the czars and the Soviet rulers. Four great post-medieval attempts to conquer Russia came from or through Poland: the Polish capture of the Kremlin in 1610, the invasion by Sweden's King Charles XII in 1709, the invasion by Napoleon's Grand Army in 1812, and Hitler's invasion of 1941.¹ Evaluating the reliability of the Poles must then be undertaken with the fact in mind that Poland, due to her size, location and population, is critical in many respects to the Soviet Northern Tier military posture.

It is the contention of this thesis that the Polish armed forces are indeed reliable members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization and furthermore that they would respond in a positive fashion to participate in joint combat operations against a force deemed hostile to the Warsaw Pact.

In any political analysis existing preconceptions influence a research effort. The Polish case is no different. The opinion of some in the west to the effect that the Polish armed forces harbor tendencies to seek Western support may well be unfounded and illusory. Poland is firmly implanted as a member of the Warsaw Treaty Organization. As General Jaruzelski stated upon his declaration of martial law in December 1981: "The Polish-Soviet alliance is and will remain the cornerstone of the Polish raison d'etat, the guarantee of the inviolability of our borders."² Poland's military personnel and equipment are unequivocally tied to the Warsaw Pact Treaty Organization's warfare doctrine and defense posture, as will be discussed.

Furthermore, Poland has little choice in the matter. Poland is the most important piece of real estate vital to the security of the Soviet Union. The words of General Jaruzelski indicate that this is fully understood by the ruling Polish military elite.

"Brotherhood-in-arms with the Soviet Army, allied ties with the Warsaw Treaty states--this is a historic achievement of our Army and of our people, the foundation of security and peaceful development of socialist Poland."³

The Polish regime realizes that a total departure of Poland in terms of allegiance or membership in the Warsaw Treaty Organization will not be allowed by the Soviets. The Soviets would prevent such a departure with armed intervention, if necessary.

In order to support the basic contention that the Polish armed forces should be considered reliable members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization, an approach will be utilized that encompasses the following major areas: an applicable working definition of reliability will be established; a review of the history of the armed forces will be undertaken; and analysis of the behavior of armed forces in crises will be reviewed; the burden of governing, the problem of the economy, and the role of the Church will be discussed; various additional factors will be summarized. This admittedly eclectic and selective approach consisting of a treatment of these aforementioned areas has been chosen for the following reasons.

First, the concept of reliability must be defined in specific terms to allow analysis to proceed. Dale Herspring's definition of Eastern European military reliability offers a framework for a point of orderly departure in examining the contention of the basic thesis that the Polish armed forces are reliable members of the Warsaw Pact. It is vitally important to establish to what degree and in which circumstance the term reliability is to be applied in the

contention of the thesis. A review of the establishment of the Polish armed forces after World War II will then follow to attempt to understand how significant the Russian presence was at the very start in influencing the Polish armed forces to be reliable members of the Soviet camp. History over the past World War II period will also provide a basis to construct a pattern of just how the Polish armed forces have performed in various crisis situations. This crisis behavior will provide an important historical viewpoint from which to project the reliability of the Polish armed forces in future crisis or conflicts.

The next task of the analysis is to examine the burden assumed by the Polish military when it took over all the functions of government. The goal will be to ascertain if this burden of governing has affected the military institution in Poland, specifically in its ability to conduct combat operations. In addition, the state of the Polish economy will be reviewed in terms of effects in the reliability of the armed forces. A review also of the effects of the Church on reliability will be addressed.

Lastly a list of various additional relevant factors will be discussed. These factors either support or fail to support the argument for reliability.

In conclusion, an attempt will be made to synthesize all the factors bearing on the reliability question to suggest

support for the contention of the positive reliability of the Polish Armed Forces in the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

In introducing what this research study will accomplish it is equally important to acknowledge that it is by no means an all-inclusive approach to the issue. The fine lines of distinction between loyalty and allegiance will be covered broadly under the reliability issue. The actions of the Soviets and their perceptions of the Polish situation can not be completely analyzed in such a short research effort. Furthermore a precise scenario of Polish and Warsaw Treaty Organization confrontation with NATO will not be undertaken. The main thrust then of this research effort will be from the point of view of the Polish armed forces looking out from Poland and in their relationship with the USSR.

II. RELIABILITY

The first task in dealing with the issue of reliability is to define it. Reliability has different connotations for different people. Therefore it is essential that a definition be established which will be consistently used throughout the research of the subject. For the purpose of this study, to define the concept in a military sense, reliability can be broken down into two components. The first component can be labeled a condition of reliability, i.e. describing under what conditions a force can be depended upon to execute its orders. The second and key component is a standard of reliability, i.e., describing just to whom a force owes its allegiance--whether, in the case of the Polish armed forces, it would be their leaders, their government, the Warsaw Pact or the Soviet Union. This standard of reliability closely borders on a type of loyalty which encompasses the scope of reliability as it applies to a military establishment. The conditions of reliability will be discussed first.

Dale Herspring and Ivan Volgyes in their study of Eastern European Armies offer four categories that may be considered under the title of conditions of reliability. These categories provide a convenient and well thought out framework

for an analysis of the reliability issue. From the start this research effort will adopt the terminology and basic points of departure of Herspring and Volgyes and apply this method to the Polish armed forces. The four categories that these authors establish are: internal offensive, internal defensive, external defensive and external offensive.⁴

In the internal offensive category Herspring states that it refers to the probability that significant segments of the professional officer corps will act against the party leadership by attempting a coup d'etat or try to oppose it by forcing military interests on an unwilling party leadership.⁵

This category is of little use in the Polish case since the military did not effect a coup d'etat. The army did not deprive the ruling communist party of its powers nor attempt to change the existing political system. In Poland a weakened Party apparatus was replaced by military members gradually assuming areas of greater responsibility in the government until the leadership of the government, the party and the military became one and the same. The Army in Poland didn't (in Herspring's sense) act in an internal offensive role but, in essence, just outright assumed all essential party leadership functions. A coup d'etat did not take place.

The second condition category is that of internal defensive reliability, i.e., the notion of intent to defend the incumbent regime from internal attack. This aspect of reliability has

major applicability to the present Polish situation. The ruling military authority, acting as the regime in Poland, has and will continue to use various segments of the Armed Forces to provide necessary political stability and security to sustain itself in power. This assertion will be discussed further in terms of the standard of reliability of the Polish forces as demonstrated in the actions of the Polish forces in various crisis scenarios over the years. Suffice it to say at this time, that the internal defensive reliability is essential in discussing Polish Armed Forces in the external categories of reliability that follow. Without a functioning positive internal defensive reliability, under present conditions of military rule, any notion of external defensive or offensive reliability would be seriously undermined. In other words, if the present military rulers, who seem to hold a consensus in Polish military leadership, as far as the West can see, could not rally the Armed Forces in their defense, then, they would be ill-put to organize and lead a national external defensive effort of any sort. Furthermore, very basically, if the present military leadership did not have the backing of its armed forces it would cease to exist. As will be discussed in a later portion of this research effort, the governing military regime is using the armed forces in several required supportive roles domestically.

In the third condition category, that of external defensive, Herspring refers to the probability that the armed forces will defend the state against external threats.⁶ These threats originate from sources outside Poland and will be discussed in three scenarios.

With the military elite of Poland currently holding governmental power the previous problems of conflicting orders and growing military autonomy from the civilian party squabbles must be significantly decreased. Orders now flow directly to the armed forces from their leaders. While the elimination of this problem is a positive contribution to the response of the armed forces it does not insure total compliance with orders vis a vis an external threat. It is in the external threat area more than any other category mentioned that the attitudes of society at large play a vital role. It is in this case that the role of the conscript plays a deciding factor. The conscript may have to go out at home or abroad and die for his country. This is very different for the conscript's role in the previously mentioned internal categories. In order to risk the lives of their sons and possibly bring to Poland the hardships of war which are so familiar from the past, the populace, as a whole who basically the conscript represents, must view the governing regime as defending the country's national interest in standing up to an external threat.⁷

It is in this first of two external categories that the initial question of the whole analysis first finds some provocative issues which will support the premise of the reliability of the Polish armed forces as Warsaw Pact members. There are three basic scenarios in the external defensive category.⁸ They are: defense against attack by other Warsaw Pact neighbors, defense against an attack by the Soviet Union alone, and defense against an attack by NATO. The last case, for purposes of this study, is the only one that will be considered in attempting to judge Poland's reliability as a Warsaw Pact member. The basic issue is whether Poland will join Warsaw Pact forces and respond to an attack by NATO.

There are three factors that have some bearing on this issue. First, a survey of Polish armed forces actions in certain crises situations since World War II, which will be reviewed later as part of this research effort, will indicate that, in 1956 and in 1980, the threat of Polish armed resistance was a factor in deterring a Soviet invasion. This shows that the Polish armed forces are capable of staging a resistance effort to an external threat. Secondly the Polish armed forces are trained in and fully adopt the Warsaw Pact coalition warfare doctrine which embodies joint combat operations by its members. Therefore, the basic and central training done by the Polish armed forces supports a joining with other Warsaw Pact members in combat. The third factor, though disassociated directly from the Polish

armed forces, is that NATO is a defensive alliance and that the likelihood of an offensive move by NATO forces against Poland is nonexistent. In summary then the category of external defensive reliability contributes as an indicator which will determine overall Polish armed forces reliability as a Warsaw Pact member, albeit in a minor sense.

In the fourth condition category, that of external-offensive, Herspring refers to the willingness of the military to support the regime in an offensive campaign against other countries.⁹ As in the previous external category the identification of the act of aggression with the national interest becomes crucial in attaining a success. The backing by the populace will determine the long term effectiveness of the armed forces which is again primarily conscripts. Herspring outlines four major categories of this offensive type action, namely: attack on another Warsaw Pact country, attack on a neutral, attack on the USSR and attack on NATO.¹⁰

First of all with the amount of Soviet divisions in East Germany and surrounding Poland from the East a repeat of the Polish attack of 1920 on the USSR is improbable and will not be considered. The joining of Poland in an attack against another Warsaw Pact member will be treated under the review of Polish Armed Forces action in crisis later in this analysis. The only time Poland displayed this capability was in 1968 against Czechoslovakia. The crux of the issue really is, will Poland join Warsaw Pact forces in an attack against a

neutral or NATO? This is the real issue, in fact, of this whole thesis. Therefore, this external offensive condition of reliability will be used as a chief case indicator in this study.

The second component of reliability is a standard of reliability, i.e., for whom will the Polish armed forces be reliable. This standard of reliability borders on basic loyalty. For purposes of this study there appear to be three cases namely: reliability to military leaders, reliability to the government, reliability to the Warsaw Pact. Reliability to the Warsaw Pact implies reliability to the Soviet Union. The Warsaw Pact provides a buffer zone and first line of defense for the Soviet Union. Soviet security is the basis for the Warsaw Pact. A review of Polish armed forces during crisis situations will show a distinct obedience to their local military leaders.

Since the Polish army is the government, at the present time, the question of reliability to the government, while a worthy question to pursue over the years is not in doubt at the present time.

In February 1981 when General Jaruzelski assumed the premiership, generals assumed other prominent government positions.¹¹ With the martial law declaration on December 13, 1981 the all-military Council of National Salvation eclipsed the Party Politburo. "Militarization" of Party and government structures through the replacement of

civilians by military appointees proceeded. For example 7 of the 47 regional governors were generals, and officers assumed a number of key regional party positions.¹² With Jaruzelski as its head the Military Council for National Salvation consisted of three lieutenant generals, one admiral, nine major generals, two generals, three colonels, one lieutenant colonel and one lieutenant commander.¹³ At the present time the Jaruzelski regime has demonstrated it is in control, ergo, a reliability of sorts must exist among the armed forces for the government and its leader. The more important and extremely difficult question to answer is how reliable the Polish armed forces are as Warsaw Pact members. This then will be the main thrust of further analysis.

In partial summary in attempting to define reliability as an issue to pursue in the Polish case, the external offensive and defensive conditions as applied to the standard of a Warsaw Pact member will be the focus of further efforts.

III. ARMED FORCES

Before venturing further in analyzing the reliability question of the Polish armed forces, it is appropriate to briefly examine these armed forces to understand how they were formed in the initial post-World War II era and how their development progressed. This historical approach will offer indications and insights which will be important for judging and estimating the Polish armed forces performance today as members of the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

The origins of the "Polish People's Army" created in 1945 can be traced principally to the First and Second Polish Armies organized by Moscow on Soviet territory in 1943.¹⁴ It is significant to note that, even at the very start of today's Polish armed forces, they had a solid pro-Soviet base and were born on Russian soil. These two Polish armies were dominated by Soviet officers and, by the end of the war, one-third of their officers were Soviets.¹⁵ In 1948 with the purge of Gomulka by Stalin, the elimination of any nationalistically oriented Polish military leaders took place. Thus the Soviet leadership directly selected a Polish military leadership with a pro-Soviet stance. General Wacław Komar and several others who would return to the scene with Gomulka in 1956 were among the purged.¹⁶ In the following year major Soviet-oriented organizational changes in the Polish Army occurred

as a stronger emphasis was put in integrating Soviet officers into all aspects of the Polish armed forces. The overall effect, of course, was the overwhelmingly to further shape the Polish armed forces in a reliable mold for the Soviet Union.

Soviet Marshal Rokossowski became Defense Minister and Commander in Chief in 1949; subsequently the posts of chief of the general staff, commander of the ground forces, heads of all service branches, and commanders of all the military districts were filled by Soviet officers.¹⁷ The basic development was that the Polish Army became an extra-national force which was directly subordinated to the Soviet High Command. As A. Ross Johnson states: "The USSR decreed organizational changes in the Polish army; military organization, training patterns, doctrine tactics, and even uniforms were modified to conform to the Soviet model."¹⁸ Although a member of the Polish Party Politburo, Marshall Rokossowski took his orders from Moscow.¹⁹ The Soviets had established themselves as firmly influencing and controlling the Polish armed forces.

The next significant change in the Polish armed forces occurred in 1956 with the return to power of Gomulka. The resistance effort mustered by certain elements of the armed forces, as will be discussed in a later part of this thesis, played a significant role in the decision of the Soviet leadership to allow Gomulka to return. With Gomulka's return to power the Polish armed forces were, in fact,

renationalized. Marshal Rokossowski and his entourage of Soviet officers were recalled by Khrushchev. Many original members of the People's Army, who had been purged with Gomulka in the late forties, now returned to military leadership positions. These appointees included: General General Marian Spychalski as defense minister, General Zygmunt Duszynski, deputy chief of staff; General Janusz Zarzycki, head of MPA; General Adam Uziembo, Chief of Military-Political Academy and General Jerzy Fonkowicz, head of the defense ministry. All had fought in the People's Army and had been side-tracked under Stalin.¹⁴ In addition Generals Bielecki and Komar and Admiral Wisniewski were named to head the Air Force, the Internal Forces and the Navy respectively; all three had commanded units that had mobilized to resist the Soviets in 1956.

The renationalization of the armed forces became manifest as the professional military leadership began to reassert its prerogatives. Specifically, as A. Ross Johnson describes:

"The focus of political activity in the armed forces shifted from the political apparatus, discredited in the Stalinist era, to Party organizations which reformist elements often initially dominated. The result was to reduce Party influence in the military establishment because only a minority of soldiers and half the officer corps were subject to Party discipline, and because Party organizations in the military had less impact on activities of the professional commanders than did the military's political apparatus."²⁰

An early indication of the military asserting its prerogatives was the establishment in February 1957 of

a Military Council in the Ministry of National Defense as a formal advisory body bringing together, under the chairmanship of the Minister, the heads of the major departments and services.²¹

Although the hierarchy of the Polish armed forces was restaffed with Polish officers, the military structure model and the actual doctrine of the Soviet Union still provided a basis for the Polish armed forces. The Gomulka regime's commitment that Poland would remain a firm ally to the Soviet Union as well as Poland's inclusion in the Soviet bloc resulted in the emulation of Soviet military doctrine as it pertains to the threat to the Soviet bloc in Europe.²²

At this time, however, in the Soviet Union, military science was changing. Specifically, the statis Stalin-generated concepts of warfare in Europe were being restructured to reflect an offensive posture of Soviet bloc forces in the European theater.²³ At the same time that Soviet military science was transitioning the elite of the Polish armed forces were developing strong professional relationship's with the Soviet military. A major exchange of military experience and knowledge was taking place between the Polish Armed forces and the Soviets as manifested in exercises and training. This period in the history of the Polish armed forces can be characterized as one when actual bonds of professional dependence were created and strengthened between the Soviet and Polish military. A. Ross Johnson illustrates these

emerging bonds in his research regarding the Polish development of a coalition warfare doctrine. He writes:

"Attuned to the rethinking of Soviet strategy then underway, in the late 1950's Polish military specialists evaluated, in a series of military journal articles and books, a doctrine of coalition warfare which reflected Poland's military participation in the Warsaw Pact and was thus largely Soviet-derived, but which embodied a Polish component."²⁴

What is significant further is that this doctrine was formulated in the late 1950's and as such preceded the multilateral Warsaw Pact field exercises which were held formally in 1961 for the first time. As Johnson states, "the doctrine suggests an earlier Soviet decision to place greater reliance on East European forces in military planning for European contingencies than is usually assumed."²⁵

Thus, even though the personal domination of the Polish armed forces by the Soviets had been terminated, there remained and blossomed a strong professional relationship between the two. The Poles had established themselves as active reliable members of the Soviet camp.

Material modernization followed and accompanied the professional resurgence among the Polish armed forces. This massive material improvement also was to be Soviet-oriented.

The late sixties and early seventies were to see the Polish operational Army develop into fifteen divisions. Two of these divisions are unique, elite, special purpose units: a sea landing division and an airborne assault division.

The ground forces have some 3,800 tanks including T-54/55/64 and T-34. The Navy includes a naval airstation regiment with sixty combat aircraft. The Air Force has some 725 combat aircraft, mostly MIG 21 and 17, but including 28 SU-20 modern fighter bombers. Table I reflects selected data on present Polish military capabilities.²⁶

The aforementioned two areas of major advancement of the Polish armed forces, namely in material and doctrine, also occasioned two areas of dissatisfaction in the mid sixties among the Polish officer corps. This dissatisfaction arose from the fact that the Polish military lagged behind the Soviet army in modernization and especially, that Soviet client-states in the Middle East received new weapon systems before they were made available to Poland.

A review of several sources indicates the status of the Soviet Arab allies vis a vis Poland as follows:²⁷

ARAB ALLIES	POLAND
Tanks: T54/55 Received early sixties	Same not received until mid sixties
Missiles: SA2 Received early sixties	SA2 received mid sixties
Aircraft: MIG 21 Received approximately at same time but various versions appear.	MIG 21

In 1967 the issue of Poland lagging behind the Arab clients in receipt of military hardware came to a head when there was considerable admiration in the Polish military

TABLE I
SELECTED DATA ON MILITARY CAPABILITIES: POLAND

Population and Forces	1962	1967	1973	1978	1982
Population					
Military Service:					
Ground Forces		2 years	2 years	2 years	2 years
Air Force		3 years	2 years	2 years	2 years
Navy		3 years	3 years	3 years	3 years
Total Regular Forces:	257,000	270,000	280,000	306,000	317,000
Ground Forces	200,000	185,000	200,000	222,000	207,000
Motorized Divisions		9	8	8	8
Tank Divisions		5 ^b	5	5	5
Airborne Divisions		1	1	1	1
Amphibious Assault Divisions		1	1	1	1
Air Force/Air Defense	45,000	70,000	55,000	62,000	88,000
Combat Aircraft		820	696	725	705
Navy	12,000	15,000	25,000	22,500	22,000
Territorial, Internal Security and Border Troops	45,000	45,000	73,000	95,000	85,000
Total Military Forces	302,000	315,000	353,000	401,500	412,500

SOURCE: IISS, The Military Balance, for data for 1962, 1967, 1973, 1978, and 1982.

^a1962 population data are from 1960.

^bArmored Divisions.

establishment for Israeli equipment and tactics in the six-day war and disparagement of Soviet equipment and tactics.²⁸ Although Poland was catching up in acquiring the various combat material that the Soviets had given first to their Mid-East clients, the Israelis had shown that the very equipment and tactics that the Soviets supplied could be defeated. Radio Free Europe Research of June 1967 revealed Defense Minister Spychalski alluding to criticism of Soviet equipment in a series of meetings. It was in the area of Air Defense weapons where the strongest resentment was displayed. Following the expression of such sentiments the entire leadership of the Air Defense Command was ousted.²⁹ In addition, in the previously mentioned area of coalition doctrine development, the Soviets have continually failed to publically recognize the Polish contribution, thus providing a second area of disgruntlement among Polish military elites.

In general, the period 1960 to 1973 was characterized by instability among the senior Polish military leaders. A. Ross Johnson suggests the following three reasons for the instability.³⁰ The first reason was Gomulka's own back-tracking from the spirit of the Polish October of 1956. Gomulka sought to de-emphasize the nationalism that put him back in power. His swing toward the Soviets transmitted a signal to the Polish military not to proceed too far astray from their Soviet counterparts. Secondly, there arose partisan

factional struggle for power within the ranks of the military elite. The conflicting themes of party allegiance, pro-nationalistic tendencies, pure professional military ideals and anti-semitism all served to be sources of factional division. Thirdly, the Soviets themselves sought to discourage nationalistic tendencies.

It was in the 1973 timeframe that Polish military elite started to experience stability. The military leaders who came to power at that time were a new group. They were not characterized by any prewar communist experience but were members who fought in the Polish army formed in the USSR during World War II. A. Ross Johnson describes these leaders as having followed professional rather than political career paths.³¹ They had almost universally received advanced military training in the USSR. This new officer corps is characterized with a profile of "Polishness". Only a handful of Russian Poles remain among the ranks. Poles of Jewish origin have been eliminated entirely. A full 81 percent of all officers come from worker and peasant families with 85 percent party members.³² In addition, the educational level of the officer and enlisted ranks has increased significantly. Table II depicts this fact.³³

One figure who typifies this new breed of Polish military elite is General Jaruzelski. His biographical sketch gives some insight into his profile. Although some analysts like Pierre Hassner would argue that he is a typical communist

TABLE II
SELECTED DATA ON BACKGROUND CHARACTERISTICS OF NORTHERN TIER OFFICER CORPS

COMMUNIST PARTY MEMBERSHIP OF NORTHERN TIER OFFICERS
(percent per year)

	1945	48	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
Poland	15	40	50		53			67					67					80					85		
GDR					74	79.5	86					96.3	96	95	96.1	97				98	98				
CSSR																75									

EDUCATIONAL LEVEL OF NORTHERN TIER OFFICER CORPS
(Academic Degrees, percent per year)

	12	14	17	18	20	25	25	25	25	30	30	30	35	35	40	40	50
Poland																	
GDR	1				6				10	13	14		16			22	
CSSR									21								

MILITARY TECHNICIANS OR ENGINEERS
(Degree Holders, percent per year)

	13	25	25	25	25	40	40	50
Poland								
GDR	2	5	10	14	17	17	16	
GSSR					31			

SOURCES: Dale Herspring, "Technology and the Changing Political Officer in the Armed Forces: The Polish and East German Cases," *Studies in Comparative Communism*, Winter, 1977, p. 393; Dale Herspring, *East German Civil-Military Relations: The Impact of Technology 1949-72*, New York, Praeger Publishers, 1973, pp. 192-193, speech by Defense Minister Lomsky, CTK International Service, June 2, 1966, in FBIS USSR and Eastern Europe, No. 107/66, June 3, 1966; Polish and GDR media references.

political general, there are others, like Richard Spielman, who think otherwise.³⁴ When the Soviets invaded Poland in 1939 the then 16-year old Jaruzelski, his family, and hundreds of thousands of other Poles were deported to Soviet central Asia. There he spent three years as an "involuntary guestworker".³⁵ Jaruzelski was born to a family of the gentry and had been receiving a classical education at a prestigious monastery boarding school. As a result of this deportation, Jaruzelski was never to see his family again. Jaruzelski fought as a junior officer in the Soviet-sponsored Second Polish Army during World War II. He was promoted to major general at age 33 and his subsequent military career consisted exclusively of line positions until his unusual promotion in 1960 from division commander to MPA chief; by virtue of the latter position he became a Party Central Committee member in 1964. In 1965 he became chief of the general staff.³⁶ Thus it can be seen that General Jaruzelski has a background that might imply both pro and anti-Soviet tendencies. Two implications here are worthy of note. First, General Jaruzelski, to a great extent typifies the senior military elite in Poland with a background that is distinctly pro Soviet in his professional education, operational experience and exposure. Secondly, one can pose an argument that he would harbor some latent anti-Soviet feelings due to his unfortunate early childhood experience.

In further assessing the Polish Armed Forces it is significant to note a distinction that is made between those armed forces of the operational army dedicated to external defense and those forces dedicated to a defense of national territory. This defense of national territory idea ostensibly revolves around the tenet for the need to prepare Poland against massive nuclear attack.³⁷ These forces include an air defense group, civil defense units, internal security units and certain territorial units. In addition to a defensive task, various units have a second explicit function of quelling internal unrest. It is estimated that the so-called ZOMO forces, which is only one of these security units, numbers between 80,000 and 100,000 alone.³⁸ The secondary purpose of these security units is politically significant in that these units can and have been used to support the regime in power. Later in this thesis, when a review of Polish Armed Forces in crisis situations is undertaken, the use of these security units will be addressed. In essence, however, when a reliability analysis of Polish armed forces is undertaken, the aforementioned security related units must be considered separately from the operational army. In general, these security types are specially trained, well-paid, and receive special privileges. These security forces include all the units in Figure 1.³⁹

Ministry of Internal Affairs

Vistula Brigades (Elite Security Units)	Motorized Police Units	Police Forces (Militia)	Auxiliary Police Forces	Security Service	Frontier Defense Forces
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Source: Compiled by A. Ross Johnson from Polish media references

Figure 1. Organization of Polish Internal Security Forces (key components)

Since the security forces play a significant role in providing the implementation of the military regime's governing policy on occasion, in terms of directly confronting the populace, it is worthwhile then to briefly examine the main element of these forces, namely ZOMO, and to understand its creation and motivation. ZOMO which, loosely translated, comes out to be motorized police units, has been in existence since 1945. ZOMO includes two types of soldiers: (1) prisoners offered the option of joining ZOMO instead of serving a sentence for criminal offenses; (2) soldiers who have completed two years of military service, mainly from the countryside with poor prospects in civilian life, poorly educated, and of generally low

moral and political levels.⁴⁰ One of the perquisites granted these individuals is preference on housing assignments for their families.

Although it would seem at first glance that these ZOMO forces constitute merely a brainless goon squad, this would be an erroneous assumption. An indication of this is that the former ZOMO head was a former Wehrmacht soldier who was taken prisoner by the Russians and trained by the NKVD in Russia after the war. Today, ZOMO is one of the best equipped police forces in the world.⁴¹ ZOMO's current officers are graduates of higher military schools. Most of the officers have had two prior years of regular army service and are closely scrutinized by political officers before they are selected for ZOMO assignment.⁴² There is even a selective process at the conscript level to insure only prospective reliable party types end up with assignment in the ZOMO force.

The operational army, on the other hand, consists of basically two classes--the officers, a by-and-large professional corps, and the enlisted portion--seventy three per cent (according to the ISS 1983) of which consists of conscripts.⁴³ In this regard, it is interesting to note that according to the ISS 1983, 59% of the total Polish armed forces consists of conscripts. The aforementioned facts then imply that the motivation for the security forces can be, to a large extent, their material rewards.

The officer class in the operational armed forces also finds many privileges and functions as an elite group. The officers must, however, motivate an armed force of mostly involuntary temporary soldiers who typify a cross section of the Polish populace.

One determinant from which one can arrive at conclusions concerning the performance of any armed forces is training. The training that is available to scrutinize of the Warsaw Pact forces is the formal training of officers and the exercise training conducted by officers and troops in the field. In the area of formal officer training, promotion to the highest military commands of East Europe is restricted to the elite who pass through the three levels of the alliance's education system.⁴⁴ The third level of this system is the Voroshilov General Staff Academy in Moscow. It is here where the final education of an aspiring colonel takes place. These graduates are inducted into a greater socialist officer corps bound together by school ties, trained in a common military doctrine addressed to the conduct of joint missions, and accustomed to using Russian as the language of military communication.⁴⁵

Christopher Jones further argues that, in effect, this Warsaw Treaty Organization education system detaches the high ranking East European officers from the local defense ministries and binds them to the Soviet defense ministry. Jones theorizes that the very admissions processes to Soviet

academies is used to identify those East European officers who accept Soviet hegemony over the Warsaw Alliance. Furthermore the Voroshilov program itself denies senior Warsaw Treaty Organization officers training in any strategy other than that defined by Soviet doctrine.⁴⁶ The East European officers who matriculate through this system later work alongside their Soviet counterparts in the command structure of the Alliance. These East European officers then receive ample opportunity for professional and social favoritism from the Soviet military hierarchy. In fact, the East European graduates of Voroshilov, particularly those graduated with honors, appear to enjoy a virtual monopoly in the Warsaw Treaty Organization on the posts of defense ministers, chiefs of staff and chiefs of main political administrations.⁴⁷ This is significant since the committee of defense ministers is considered to be the highest military organization of the alliance.⁴⁸ According to figures published in a 1974 volume edited by General of the Army E.E. Mal'tsev, Commandant of the Lenin Military-Political Academy, 33 percent of the Polish officer corps has a higher or special technical education. General Jaruzelski is a graduate of the Voroshilov Academy, as are, it can be speculated, several of the other ranking senior Polish military. The exact number of Polish graduates of the academy can only be theorized. However, a recent study by the RAND Corporation indicated that the overall educational

level of Polish officers is the highest of the Warsaw Pack Officer Corps.⁴⁹ The report stated: "The Polish Officer Corps is as well trained as the Soviet officer corps, if not better trained. In terms of command qualifications, capabilities and training, the Soviets and Poles are equal".⁵⁰

In the area of troop training there are two distinct characteristics to be noted in regard to the Warsaw Pact exercises. Christopher Jones states that the armed forces of Poland participated in at least 25 ground forces/combined arms WTO exercises in the period from 1961-79. Of these 25, 7 were conducted in Poland; 7 were held completely outside Poland; and 11 were conducted jointly on the territory of Poland and of the GDR or Czechoslovakia. Of these 25 exercises, commanders can be identified for 21. Of these 21, 6 had Polish commanders. Of the 15 foreign commanders, 10 were Soviet officers. Christopher Jones remarks that this pattern of the location of ground forces/combined arms exercises reduces the opportunity for national defense ministries to develop a capability for the conduct of a war in defense of national territory.⁵¹ In addition, the pattern of the assignment of command reduces the possibility that the officers of a given state will acquire the experience necessary to conduct large-scale combined arms actions in defense of their national territory.⁵² As Jones notes further, this pattern also accustoms national military forces to accept commands from foreign officers.

There are several inferences to be drawn from Polish participation in these WTO exercises. First the actual frequency of Polish participation is probably higher than recorded since the WTO does not report all exercises conducted. Second there is no doubt that these exercises provide a basic training source to insure unit readiness on a mass participatory scale. Thirdly, while serving as a training vehicle for combat operations, they undoubtedly serve, as Jones has noted, as a vehicle to reaffirm Soviet ultimate command of the forces and thus either discourage or outright eliminate the thought of the forces functioning under national auspices.

In addition, in the Polish case there occurred in the mid-seventies an increase in bilateral cooperation between the members of the Northern Tier with minimal Soviet overt involvement. There has been an increase in military academy exchange participation as well as exercises consisting of Polish, Czechoslovak, and East German forces without the presence of Soviet military units.⁵³ This training unequivocally reinforces autonomy among the different members as well as contributing to military readiness.

In summary, the background of the Polish armed forces since World War II is definitely one that has been influenced heavily by the Soviet Union, and Poland's participation in the Warsaw Treaty organization. It is, however, inaccurate to say that this influence has been and

will be the factor that dominates all of the performance and actions of the Polish armed forces. It is, of course, at the same time incorrect to arrive at the opposite conclusion that the Polish armed forces are as free in their actions as a West European country. A review of the Polish armed forces in different post-World War II crisis scenarios will support these two seemingly conflicting conclusions.

IV. POLISH ARMED FORCES IN CRISES

The Polish armed forces were used in crisis situations that arose in 1956, 1968, 1970, 1976, 1980 and 1981. An understanding of the role of the armed forces during each of these crises may suggest a background from which estimates of current and future reliability can be projected.

In 1956 strikes and riots by industrial workers broke out in Poznan. Local security units were unable to quell the disturbances. The regular army was called upon but refused to fire on the strikers. The result was that elite security forces from elsewhere were called in to restore order. The disturbances resulted in the restoration to power of the once purged party leader, Gomulka. A major factor explaining the Soviet leadership's acceptance of Gomulka's return was the threat of armed Polish resistance against Soviet efforts to prevent it.⁵⁴ Gomulka's reaction to the movement of Soviet troops close to Warsaw was echoed in his remarks to Krushchev:

"I've just received a report that some of your forces are moving toward Warsaw. I ask...I demand... that you order them to stop and return to their bases. If you don't something terrible and irreversible will happen."⁵⁵

With respect to the Polish army it was internally divided between the Soviet generals, headed by Rokossowski, and lower ranking Polish officers sympathetic to Gomulka;

as a result, on a large scale it was neutralized and remained in its barracks.⁵⁶ Despite this overall neutralization, some forces under the leadership of General Komar organized a Committee for the Defense of Warsaw and prepared to resist the approaching Soviets.⁵⁷ In addition Admiral Jan Wisniewski, Commander of coastal defense units and General Jan Frey-Bielecki, an Air Force unit commander, prepared their units for armed resistance. This partial mobilization of Polish armed forces had the effect on the Soviets of reconsidering the act of exercising armed intervention. Krushchev himself recounted:

"As we began to calculate which Polish regiments we could count on to obey Rokossovsky, the situation began to look somewhat bleak."⁵⁸

Thus, in 1956, the operational army failed to be effective in an internal defensive role and the elite security force had to be called upon. However, the action of the Armed Forces who demonstrated the will to resist a possible Soviet invasion displayed a credible if not totally capable external defensive force. Even though they could not have defeated the Soviet advance, they could have displayed some resistance and, as has been noted, this was not taken lightly by Krushchev.

The Polish armed forces involvement in the Czechoslovak invasion of 1968 is a different story. It is estimated that some 50,000 Polish operational army soldiers participated in the Soviet-led invasion.⁵⁹ Since there was no opposition

to the invaders by the Czechs, the argument is frequently set forth that this venture was not a true test of Warsaw Pact troop effectiveness and reliability. This is true. However, the fact remains that, in the case of the Poles, East Germans, Hungarians and Bulgarians there was no pre-intervention guarantee that there would not be blood shed. The risk of confrontation was undertaken and this in itself is significant. It must be mentioned in examining the Polish participation that this use of Polish armed forces was the first and only use to date in a semi-hostile action outside Polish soil. The Polish operational army thus demonstrated its capability to be used in an external offensive role.

In 1970 the military acted in an internal repressive mode against the worker strikes. The operational army backed the security police but refused to use immediate and overwhelming force as ordered.⁶⁰ During this situation the military leadership refused to act on "uncoordinated orders", according to Defense Minister Jaruzelski. The operational army had thus stood partly aside in a situation of local unrest and national leadership squabbling. A. Ross Johnson aptly describes the situation:

"This course of action doubtless derived from a conviction by the military elite that the regular forces could not be used for mass repression of their fellow countrymen...By opting for non-involvement, the military played something of the role of silent kingmaker. The precedent was that a Party leader challenged by Party opponents in a domestic crisis cannot count on the army to save his position."⁶¹

Thus, the use of the operational army in an internal defensive mode failed. This theme was to be re-enacted in the riots of 1976. The military leadership is reported to have played a moderating role. The following words of Jaruzelski at the time support this tenet. "Polish soldiers will not shoot Polish workers".⁶²

The crises occurring in 1980-1981 were to strike a bit different tune. The military in person of General Jaruzelski was playing an ever-increasing role in the government. The Polish Communist Party began to be slowly militarized as General Jaruzelski and senior military officers assumed key positions. Polish security forces were used to quell civil disturbances throughout this period and they were backed by operational army forces. There was a difference now, however, because the real locus of power had shifted from the party-controlled government to a military-controlled government. The previous problems of conflicting orders to the troops as a result of factional political differences had disappeared. These two facts alone strengthened the image of the operational army and permitted it to function successfully now in an internal defensive role. The military had arrived at a hitherto unseen position for an Eastern Bloc country at the very top of national control. General Jaruzelski's imposition of martial law had been most probably thought out for several months. Operational army units had been dispatched throughout the country to reinforce

ZOMO control of certain areas. The actual implementation of martial law on 12 December 1981 saw the security forces ZOMO doing the dirty work. The operational army did in fact back these forces. One recent visitor to Poland has commented on the total controls these forces seem to exact in a stealthful but effective manner.⁶³ It is popular opinion that these special security forces have higher pay and more prerequisites. One recent visitor ventured to state that these forces have access to narcotics and alcohol to exact their unquestionable compliance with orders.⁶⁴ While this cannot be confirmed, it implies that these security forces need more than the remuneration as regular operational army types to do their job for the commanding military. Herein lies a paradox in that these ZOMO troops enforce the ruling military will be seemingly have to be specially treated to do so while the rest of the regular operational army stands behind them. It may be that the operational army is figuratively several steps behind these troops but, nevertheless, they are there. Thus, in the most recent crises that have confronted the Polish armed forces there has been a successful response to the internal defensive role but yet a close analysis of this response reveals two groups of soldiers, on the one hand the highly responsive security types and on the other the operational army which seems to respond effectively but with just a little

hesitation. One explanation of this may, in fact, be that General Jaruzelski, in order to achieve his maintenance of power, has not chosen to place the operational military in any outright extended popular conflict role which would risk the possibility of non-compliance with orders and alienation by the public but rather has wisely chosen to employ the ZOMO forces in the up-front confrontations. By following this tactic he preserves the reputation of the operational armed forces as well as mollifying as best he can popular opinion with respect to the ruling military. Jaruzelski surely realizes the potential for bloody confrontation that can occur between the populace and the army, the result of which can achieve no meaningful beneficial end for himself or his country.

Another aspect of the political crises of the early eighties in Poland was the threat of an invasion by the Soviet Union. The Soviets did mobilize on two occasions, but no invasion occurred. There are many contributions to this Soviet decision not to use armed intervention but one related to the subject at hand is that the Soviets did fear armed resistance from the Polish populace if an invasion force entered Poland. The Soviets no doubt remembered the situation of 1956 when Khrushchev was faced with a similar problem. In addition, there were other factors that would have contributed to the strength of Polish resistance in 1980/81. The Poles had received warning from the West

concerning Soviet troop movements. Thus the Soviets would have faced armed resistance without the benefit of surprise.

Furthermore, the use of Warsaw Pact forces against Poland would have added two further difficulties. The hatred of the Poles for the Germans would have certainly resulted in fierce Polish reaction to the onslaught of East German troops on Polish soil. In addition, the very reputation of the Poles as armed resistors is recorded by a history of struggle for survival between powerful German and Russian neighbors..

The anti-Russian insurrections of 1830 and 1863 offer good examples of this. The Poles also fought bravely against the Soviet regime in 1920-21, and during World War II they fought against both German and Russian invaders.⁶⁵ It is only speculation how the Polish armed forces would have been organized against the Soviets, but the fact remains that the threat of popular armed resistance contributed to the Soviet decision not to invade.

An overview of the Polish Armed Forces in crisis situations reveals a pattern of behavior as outlined on the following matrix. In terms of the utility of the operational armed forces in suppressing domestic dissent a negative track record appears.⁶⁶ The military has not been used as the solution to correct the political or economic problems which caused each domestic crisis. It has been the security forces acting immediately and confronting the populace.

Although, as previously discussed, the armed forces appear to be waiting in the wings, it is the security forces who squelch the unrest.

The actions of the military, i.e., restraint and refusal to participate in violence, allowed the armed forces to stay apart from the political failures in the country and thus maintain a separate sense of autonomy. The military did, however, demonstrate its ability, albeit not actually put to a combat test in their involvement in showing resistance to the Soviets in 1956 and in deploying troops with the Warsaw Treaty Organization invasion force in Czechoslovakia in 1968. As

A. Ross Johnson states:

"In emphasizing the primacy of its external security functions, in recognizing that it does not command a viable instrument of mass internal repression, and in wishing to remain as uninvolved as possible in controversies within the party elite, the Polish military leadership has become a significant factor in Polish Communist politics."⁶⁷

It was this strength that the military developed that was embodied in General Jaruzelski's rising through the party and regime structure to ultimate control of the country. The history of the Polish Armed Forces actions up to 1980 conditioned it for its takeover of the government. The Army was unscarred by the political squabbling and failures of the government. The Army was the only domestic group outside the Catholic Church hierarchy that was still an operable viable force available and capable of replacing the failing communist regime.

DOMESTIC BEHAVIOR PATTERN

EVENT	SECURITY FORCES	ARMED FORCES	RESULT
1956	Local failed outside brought in	refused to use violence	elite security used/ order restored government changed
1970	Local used	would not use violence	order restored government changed
1976	Local used	soldiers won't shoot	order restored
1980- 81	Local used	military backed but avoided confrontation	order restored government changed

In summary, the Polish armed forces various responses in crises have evolved to the level that now the party and government have been dissolved and replaced by military rule. The military has assumed dominance in all aspects of national power control in the country. The action of the military has put a sudden halt to the replacement of governments that took place in 1956, 1970, 1980. This idea of "Bonapartism" or undue influence of the military has conquered and superceded all else. Now in this regard the Polish armed forces work directly for their military leader who is governing the nation. History has shown that the operational armed forces will follow the orders of their military leaders. In each of the crises discussed, it was ultimately the orders of the military leaders that prevailed. Thus then the assumption can be put forward with confidence that the operational

armed forces of Poland will follow the orders of their present government regime which is the military. In addition this regime also controls all the natural security forces which, when added to the operational armed forces, constitutes all the combat forces of Poland. The implication is that now all the Polish combat forces under control of the government will respond to its orders.

V. THE BURDEN OF GOVERNING

The military in Poland now carries the burden of governing the nation. In any analysis of reliability this awesome task must be reviewed in terms of how it detracts from the operational readiness of the armed forces doing the governing. The issue becomes that of attempting to evaluate the impact of the disruption on the Polish Armed Forces. The major disruption is largest in the ranks of the officer corps. At the start, however, it must be noted that there are essentially two branches of the Polish officer corps, i.e., the combat and non-combat units.

Overall, only 25 to 30 percent of Polish officers serve in combat units; the remaining 70 to 75 percent serve in military administration, military training schools, etc.⁶⁸ The majority of these non-combat officers are of senior rank. In this regard ninety percent or more of the military commissars have been nominated not from combat units but from military/technical academies such as the Dabrowski Military Academy in Warsaw, which alone provided 800 commissars.⁶⁹ Hence, since this academy typifies the source of the majority of officers called to serve in civilian posts this has not been the cause for the weakening in combat readiness which has occurred.

The weakening in readiness has been a result of the fact that since August 1980 the military training program in combat units has been implemented only at 50 percent maximum.⁷⁰ Since the imposition of martial law in December 1981 Polish combat units have taken part in all kinds of domestic military operations.

The military has been assigned three tasks: assault, blockade and logistical support.⁷¹ A breakdown of these assignments is as follows: internal defense forces together with ZOMO and militia have been assigned assault; the operational combat divisions have been assigned blockade tasks where they were not directly confronting the populace; their territorial defense forces were assigned logistical support. In essence then none of these forces, with the exception of some internal forces, have executed their normal training programs. Furthermore, a large portion of all of these forces are in a broad sense in use as aforementioned, ultimately supporting the military regime in its governing capacity.

In essence the burden of governing has unequivocally caused a decrease in the readiness of Polish Armed forces. Many of the fifteen divisions of the Polish army are, as previously stated, at less than 50 percent of their training capability. What is more significant is the fact that if war were to break out tomorrow, Poland would not be in a position to send all fifteen divisions outside its borders.⁷² Some units

would have to stay behind to support the governing regime in various areas as discussed.

This decrease in military readiness is a source of frustration to some members of the military. Disgruntlement and discontent have surfaced mainly at the lower levels of the officer corps. The discontent is both professional reflecting the feeling that combat capability cannot be maintained if officers spend their time inspecting and political because the army's new role is unpopular.⁷³

Amongst the more junior military personnel resentment of the role they find themselves playing is vented in urban incidents and verbal abuse directed at the ZOMO and internal security personnel.⁷⁴

While the burden of governing taxes the military institution of Poland from a combat readiness aspect, it profoundly challenges the military leader General Jaruzelski. With the make-up of the Polish Armed Forces as previously discussed, almost two thirds conscripts, he cannot afford to place the operational troops in direct confrontation with the populace. Jaruzelski realizes that it is essential that he retain the power to command the Armed Forces. The reliability of the Armed Forces to obey Jaruzelski is why he cannot risk issuing them orders which could result otherwise. As a member of the ruling elite under three successive leaders, Gomulka, Girek, and Kania, he has learned from their failures.

In short, Jaruzelski must keep the lid on Poland with a reliable military power base. There are a number of combined and independent segments of the Polish populace that could seriously jolt, or even ultimately upset, his power base, i.e., actually cause, or in the aggregate contribute to causing, the Armed Forces not to carry out the will of their leader. Each of these segments Jaruzelski must deal with. These segments are: the Party, the Church, the intelligentsia, the police, the peasants and the workers. Jaruzelski's tactics in forcing these segments of the population into some kind of mutual coexistence with his regime is his goal at a minimum. It must be noted that each of these groups intermeshes with the armed forces in one way or another. For purposes of further reviewing the reliability issue of the Armed Forces, a brief examination of how Jaruzelski will handle, or is handling, each of these groups is appropriate.

In the case of the Communist Party, Jaruzelski has, in effect, replaced it with his military council government. He has not, nor will he probably in the near future, force the ideological creed of communism on the Polish populace or for that matter on the Polish Armed Forces. Subtle restraint in this area will probably be his best tactic.

As for a relationship with the Church, he also must show restraint but in this regard the Church's advocacy of non-violence plays right into his hands of not having to expose his military power base to a major confrontation. As

a product of the ruling elite class of Poland, Jaruzelski is intelligent and educated. Although he is a military man, he cultivates intellectuals. Unlike Gomulka or Gierek, he surrounds himself with scholars and experts.⁷⁵ As a recent Rand study concluded, Jaruzelski, however, is cautious: "He likes intellectuals and keeps an open mind in a sense. If new ideas conflict with the business of running the country, he always opts instinctively for the security side of a situation".⁷⁶

In his tactics to maintain a solid military power base Jaruzelski employs the security forces in the form of ZOMO, militia and police. These are the units that confront the populace head on in the streets when necessary and not the operational army. Jaruzelski wants the image of the military to be preserved. As A. Ross Johnson states: the military represent the nation, as opposed to ZOMO, which represents the state.⁷⁷

In further effort to maintain control, Jaruzelski must and does seem to recognize the link between his largely conscript armed forces and their source--namely the peasants and the workers. To avoid major disgruntlement he must avoid the price hikes and food shortages and he must succeed in placating the workers. In this regard it is significant that the Polish Politburo has just ordered state administrative and economic bodies to consult properly with the new government

initiated unions on all matters of economic planning and wage policy.⁷⁸ Jaruzelski's dealings with the trade unions could be discussed at length and such would be well beyond the scope of this analysis but the essential point is that he must deal with them to safeguard his military power base.

It is ironic that in safeguarding his power base by taking into account and dealing with the aforementioned domestic segments of the populace, Jaruzelski assures a cohesive Armed Forces available as a Warsaw Pact member. While a detailed analysis of the Soviet viewpoint is not now appropriate, the overall result of Jaruzelski's efforts when successful is to present a reliable number of divisions, although in a decreased state of readiness but still available to the Warsaw Treaty Organization and ultimately to the Soviet Union. Of course, it remains a subjective judgment as to whether these troops would, in total, effectively fight as Warsaw Treaty members. Objectively speaking, however, the more firmly established is Jaruzelski's military base and the freer it is from domestic threat, the more it becomes viably available to the Warsaw Treaty Organization.

VI. BONAPARTISM

The notion of Polish Bonapartism was alluded to earlier, but must be reviewed again in terms of its bearing on the reliability of the Polish armed forces in responding to Warsaw Treaty Organization commands. It is A. Ross Johnson who applies the term "Bonapartism" to the Polish military regime. The term and its implications are applied and discussed by Johnson and his Rand Associates in their treatment of the Polish question. Their workshop conference held in October 1982 addressed this subject. (See Rand N-2001 AF in end note 40.)

First of all the term "Bonapartism" must be defined. The label of "Bonapartism" is, of course, derived from the period of the French Revolution when Napoleon subverted the military to his own purposes. For purposes of this analysis it is a label that implies undue military influence in the national government for purposes of self aggrandizement. This perception of the military's only ruling purpose as self serving is the key issue. Furthermore, it is the eyes of the perceiver that matter most. More specifically, do the Soviets view the Polish military regime as potentially vulnerable to a type of "Bonapartism?" In so posing this question the Western observer may be able to reach some useful assessment of the "Bonapartist" possibilities in terms of advantage to the West.

In order to attempt to estimate the Soviet viewpoint, it is necessary to examine the Soviet view of the relationship of the armed forces and the military. Soviet military writing states that Marxist-Leninism teaches that the socialist armed forces are a special organ of the state, that they contain within themselves features characteristic of the given given state, and are part of its political superstructure.⁷⁹ This political superstructure is controlled strictly by the state. General William Odom, who served as the military specialist on the staff of President Carter's National Security Council, concludes that "the Soviet military is an administrative arm of the Party, not something separate from and competing with it".⁸⁰ There is, however, more to it than the armed forces simply existing as an administrative arm as General Odom states. The Soviet analysts Harriet and William Scott are closest to the issue when they say, "no other organization in the Soviet Union is as watched and corrected by the Party leadership as the Soviet Armed Forces".⁸¹

The Red Army has played a significant role in the politics of the Russian state of this century. The Red Army was originally the instrument by which the Bolsheviks crushed their rivals in the Civil War that followed the Revolution.⁸² Since that time, as Andrew Cockburn states, there have been a number of instances when the military has intervened decisively in power struggles within the political establishment. It was units of the armed forces under the command of Marshals

Zhukov and Koniev who were brought to Moscow to counter the threat of Beria's guard of KGB troops in 1953. It was Zhukov again who came to Khrushchev's aid in 1957 when a so-called "anti-Party group" of the latter's rivals mustered a majority on the Poliburo to oust him.⁸³ While the two previously mentioned examples are highly dramatic it can be suggested that the last three established Soviet leaders, Stalin, Khrushchev and Brezhnev followed a pattern in their rise to their preeminent position in the Soviet hierarchy. Each played for and secured the support of the military industrial complex while consolidating his power and edging out formidable political rivals.⁸⁴

Further proof of the emergence of the military to a position of preeminence occurred in 1973 as the Soviet Central Committee named three new full members to its Poliburo, Chairman of the KGB, Andropov, Minister of Foreign Affairs Gromyko and Minister of Defense Grechko. Grechko's appointment marked only the second time in Soviet history that the armed forces were represented in the Poliburo, the highest decision making organ in the Soviet system by a professional military man.⁸⁵ No less noteworthy is that Andropov's appointment marked the first full Poliburo membership for the head of the secret police since Beria's execution in 1953. (As an aside, it should be noted that Andropov's KGB of which he was the head is a full member of the Soviet Armed Forces. While the duties of the many

departments of the KGB vary, the KGB force possesses its own ships, tanks, armored personnel carriers, helicopters, light aircraft and other modern weaponry.⁸⁶⁾ Thus with these two Poliburo appointments in essence it may be suggested that a transfer of the military influence to party leadership occurred.

The influence of the military continued. In a speech delivered to the Party's Central Committee, which elected him to the First Secretaryship, Andropov gave a clear indication that his consolidation of power was to follow the same pattern as that of his predecessors:

"We know well that the imperialists will never meet one's pleas for peace, it can only be defended by relying on the invincible might of the Soviet Armed Forces."⁸⁷⁾

Writing shortly afterward about the circumstances of the Andropov takeover, Dusko Doder, the Moscow correspondent of the Washington Post wrote "the backing of the armed forces was decisive".⁸⁸⁾

With this influence of the military in the current Soviet regime in focus, their perception of the Polish military governing regime should be viewed in a new light. In Poland, as stated previously, the military has replaced the Party. A type of military communism now exists. In any Bolshevik system the Party is supposed to control the gun.⁸⁹⁾ It is not that the Polish army holds the gun on the Party but rather that the Party no longer seems to exist as a governing force.

There are several ways to interpret this Polish situation. One is that ostensibly the ideological tie of the Communist Party in Poland to the other Communist Parties of the Warsaw Treaty Organization may have been dealt a severe disruption. The Communist Party system by definition accepts the hegemony of the Party in Moscow. This all-important wedge so to speak that the Soviet Union controls and wields in Eastern Europe to nudge the populace, the military and the local governments, may be weakened in Poland. The question then arises as to how reliable the Polish response could be to join a Communist-motivated combat operation. There are two aspects to this issue. One is that the Polish populace, who by vast majority were not Party members, and who, by and large, make up almost two-thirds of the operational Armed Forces, certainly will be even less eager to support Communist-motivated use of armed forces.

The second aspect that counters and over shadows this fact is that the present regime, led by Jaruzelski, has repeatedly avowed its allegiance to the Warsaw Treaty Organization. In mid-summer 1981 Jaruzelski acknowledged: "Brotherhood-in-arms with the Soviet Army, allied ties with the Warsaw Treaty states...this is a historic achievement of our army and of our people, the foundation of security and peaceful development of socialist Poland..."⁹⁰ When martial law was declared several months later General Jaruzelski again in his 13 December 1981 speech reaffirmed

Polish allegiance: "The Polish-Soviet alliance is and will remain the cornerstone of the Polish raison d'etat, the guarantee of the credibility of our borders.... Poland is, and will remain a lasting link in the Warsaw Pact, an unfailing member of the Socialist community of nations."⁹¹

In conclusion given the aforementioned statements of the Polish military regime and in view of the current position of preeminence that the professional military plays in the Soviet regime it can be suggested that the label of "Bonapartism" would not be attached to Poland by the Soviets and furthermore may be quite a misnomer.

In addition, in support of this thesis it may be contended that the "Bonapartism" issue serves only to favor the reliability of the Polish armed forces in the eyes of today's Kremlin leaders, who, themselves influenced by the military, from time to time have been known to don marshal's uniforms. In fact the emergence of the military as a governing force in Poland could be a precedent for the U.S.S.R.

VII. ECONOMICS

One of the major contributors to the political instability in Poland has been the poor shape of the Polish economy. While this thesis is not intended to explore in depth the reasons for economic failure in Poland it is appropriate to review Polish defense expenditures and defense industries to examine their status and support for the COMECON/Warsaw Treaty Organization. Two basic questions arise: whether Poland will continue sufficient defense expenditure to support its Armed Forces as in the past and, at the same time, whether it will continue to be a source of certain types of military hardware for Warsaw Treaty members.

Poland has had the highest percent of defense expenditure of the state budget of all Northern Tier countries. Figure 2 illustrates this.⁹²

There are, in fact, two facets of the Polish defense economic question, i.e., the ability of the Poles to sustain their armed forces and their ability to sustain the overall Polish military-industrial program. The official Polish defense budget available for Western scrutiny still probably does not cover all areas but it can serve as a point of departure for analysis. Table III depicts this data.⁹³

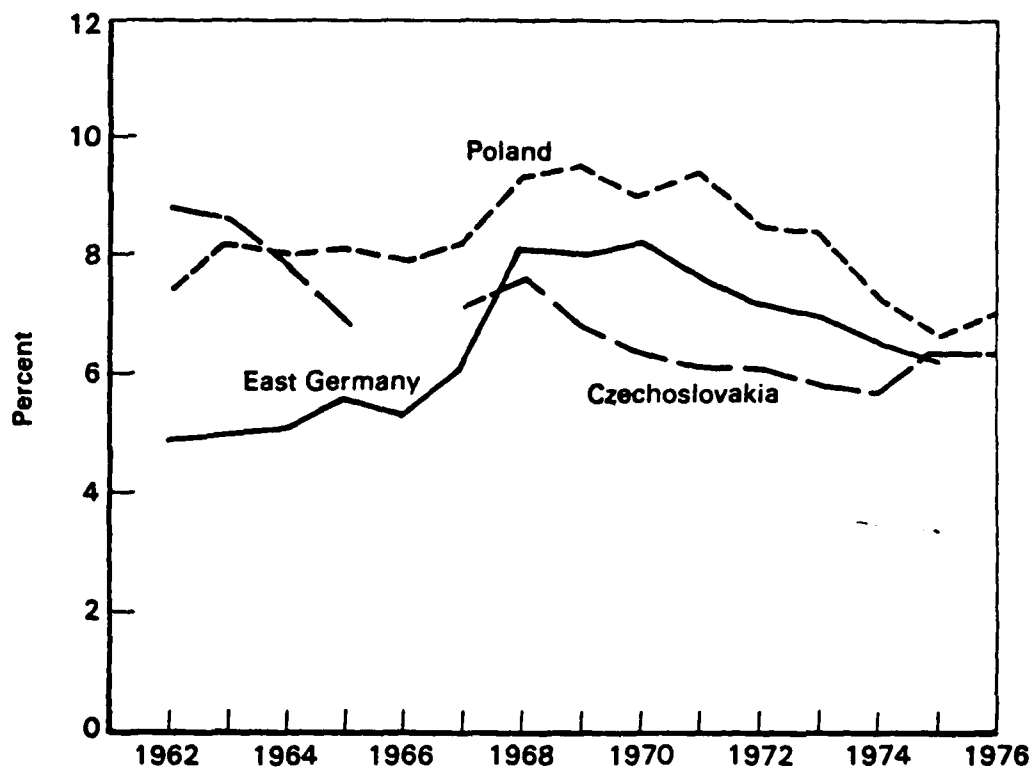


Figure 2. Comparison of Defense Expenditure as Percent of State Budget, Northern Tier Countries

TABLE III

PUBLISHED DATA ON GROWTH OF POLAND'S DEFENSE SPENDING
AND NET MATERIAL PRODUCT, 1951-80

	Defense expenditures			Net material product (% increase, 1961 prices)
	Total (bil. zl.)	Annual Increase (bil. zl.)	Percent Increase	
1951	3.8	--	--	--
1952	6.6	2.8	73.7	5.6
1953	10.3	3.7	56.0	10.5
1954	10.9	0.6	5.8	10.0
1955	12.6	1.7	15.6	8.7
1956	12.7	0.1	0.8	7.2
1957	10.1	-2.6	-20.5	10.8
1958	11.2	1.1	10.9	5.5
1959	14.3	3.1	27.7	5.2
1960	14.9	0.6	4.2	4.5
1961	17.0	2.1	14.1	7.6
1962	18.4	1.4	8.2	2.2
1963	20.7	2.3	12.5	7.2
1964	21.6	0.9	4.3	6.7
1965	23.2	1.6	7.4	6.9
1966	25.2	2.0	8.6	7.2
1967	26.4	1.2	4.8	5.6
1968	30.3	3.9	14.8	9.0
1969	33.5	3.2	10.6	2.8
1970	35.7	2.2	6.6	5.2
1971	37.2	1.5	4.2	8.1
1972	39.9	2.7	7.2	10.6
1973	41.1	1.2	3.0	10.8
1974	45.5	4.4	10.7	10.4
1975	47.6	2.1	4.6	9.0
1976	51.7	4.1	8.6	6.8
1977	57.7	6.0	11.6	5.9
1978	59.8	2.1	3.6	3.0
1979	64.3	4.5	7.5	-2.3
1980	64.5	0.1	0.3	-6.0

Source: Calculated from the Rocznik Statystyczny (Statistical Yearbook), Warsaw, for differeny years.

As can be seen, officially reported expenditures have increased year to year. This trend continued without regard for Poland's deteriorating economic situation. In 1981, defense spending increased about another U.S. \$345 million-- in a country with a foreign debt of U.S. \$25-26 billion, a totally disorganized domestic market, and a high inflation rate.⁹⁴ One Polish source argues that approval of 75 million additional Zlotys for investment in the very difficult year of 1981 derived solely from the need to continue modernization of the arms industry.⁹⁵

In comparison with the rest of Eastern Europe, Poland shows a faster growth in military expenditures than any other country except Bulgaria as the following table indicates.⁹⁶

Poland plays a significant role in the Eastern Bloc arms trade industry. In the period 1975-79, Poland exported weapons and military equipment valued at approximately U.S. \$1,400 million.⁹⁷ In the eleven years from 1969-1979, Poland's imports and exports of armament and military equipment totaled about U.S. \$2,840 million and U.S. \$2,450 million, respectively, representing a cumulative negative trade balance of about U.S. \$390 million.⁹⁸ With this negative arms trade balance Poland was tasked not only with high military expenditures but also with the obligation to finance its net arms imports with a large portion of its earnings from non-military exports.⁹⁹ Two-thirds of Poland's

TABLE IV

DEFENSE EXPENDITURES OF EAST EUROPEAN WARSAW PACT MEMBERS,
1975, 1980, 1981

	US\$ MILLION			US\$ PER CAPITA		
	1975	1980	1981	1975	1980	1981
Bulgaria	457	1,254	1,346	52	141	150
(1975=100)	100.0	274.4	294.5	100.0	271.2	288.5
(1980=100)	--	100.0	107.3	--	100.0	106.4
Czechoslovakia	1,706	3,601	3,796	116	234	246
(1975=100)	100.0	211.1	222.5	100.0	201.7	212.2
(1980=100)	--	100.0	105.4	--	100.0	105.1
East Germany	2,550	4,793	6,593	148	286	415
(1975=100)	100.0	188.0	258.5	100.0	193.2	280.4
(1980=100)	--	100.0	137.6	--	100.0	145.1
Hungary	506	1,067	1,237	48	99	115
(1975=100)	100.0	210.9	244.5	100.0	206.3	239.6
(1980=100)	--	100.0	115.9	--	100.0	116.2
Poland	2,011	5,063	5,408	59	141	151
(1975=100)	100.0	251.8	268.9	100.0	239.0	255.9
(1980=100)	--	100.0	106.8	--	100.0	107.1
Romania	707	1,361	1,351	33	61	60
(1975=100)	100.0	192.5	191.1	100.0	184.8	181.8
(1980=100)	--	100.0	99.3	--	100.0	98.4

SOURCE: Calculated from The International Institute for Strategic Studies.
The Military Balance 1982-1983, London, 1982, p. 124.

arms exports go to the biggest customers, namely the Soviet Union, the GDR and Romania. Thus, Poland seemingly has sustained material supply of her share of armaments to the Northern Tier forces.

With the status of the present Polish overall economy it would seem likely that there would start to be a decrease in Polish production and economic support for all defense expenditures. To date there has been no significant evidence to support this. There are several probable reasons for no change appearing. The first is that the foreign debt of \$25 billion to the West has been rescheduled over twenty years, with an eight year grace period during which no interest is due.¹⁰⁰ The Polish repayment schedule is a complex one as recently worked out by Western banks at a conference in Bonn in August 1983, but the overall result is that Western banks have given Poland further leeway for economic survival. The ironic fact is that this economic leeway indirectly supports the Polish responsibilities in the areas of defense expenditures within the Warsaw Pact. The Soviets also have given Poland periodic monetary assistance which at best has been difficult to ascertain the exact amount. In addition to this outside assistance the Jaruzelski regime has taken a basic theme of austerity and command discipline as the guiding tenets to solve economic problems.¹⁰¹

In essence, the Polish economy, ostensibly weak as it is by Western standards, has not failed in the area of defense support and therefore seems to have had presently little negative effect on the Polish armed forces.

VIII. THE CHURCH

There are, in fact, many nuances to the Catholic Church's role in the present political and economic dilemmas in Poland. However, to relate the Church's role to the issue of the reliability of the Polish Armed forces the most significant contribution the Church is presently making can be interpreted very broadly as one of stability and assistance.

The non-violent theme advocated by the Church has been discussed previously, but what has not been discussed is the Church's new role in the agricultural assistance area. Significant moves have already been made on an international level by the Roman Catholic Church to raise some \$1.9 billion through Western churches for a development program.¹⁰² A recent church visitor to Poland in consultation with Vatican representatives and the Polish Primate Cardinal Glemp indicate that this agricultural assistance program could be one of the keys in increasing the food supply.¹⁰³ There has, to date, been little published about the program's results.

In essence then the Church's contribution of aiding stability under the regime by these efforts is an indirect contribution to the regime's success in maintaining its military power base intact. Should the agriculture assistance program really get off the ground the result

could be a beginning of an end to the basic food associated problems of the populace, albeit temporary or not. Thus, in an ironic way the Church will serve to strengthen the military of Poland.

In addition to the factors that have been discussed up to this point in the analysis, there remains a conglomeration of inter-related and unrelated issues that both contribute to and detract from reliability. These factors will be briefly discussed in the next two chapters of this thesis.

IX. FACTORS FAVORING RELIABILITY

The following factors either reiterate previously discussed issues or introduce new areas. Each of these serves to support the premise that Polish armed forces are and will be a reliable asset of the Warsaw Pact.

--Post World War II historical formation of the Polish Armed Forces reflects a strong Soviet influence.

--The Polish Armed Forces are the most modern and largest non-Soviet Warsaw Pact military force.¹⁰⁴

--The Polish military elite is and has been closely linked with the Soviet military elite. Tactically the Polish forces have adopted the role envisaged for them as members of the Warsaw Pact. They have trained and improved the Polish Armed Forces accordingly.

--Polish military theorists have significantly contributed to the Warsaw Pact coalition warfare doctrine.

--Military equipment in the Warsaw Pact by and large has become standardized.

--Sufficient significant force training with the Soviets has taken place. As Thomas Wolfe states;

"the consensus among most Western observers is that the non-Soviet Pact forces opposing NATO in the central region can be expected to meet standards of combat capability and readiness not greatly below those that characterize the Soviet Union's own theater forces in the European arena."¹⁰⁵

--The Poles participated with 50,000 troops in the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968.

--Poland still plays a significant role in the Eastern Bloc arms trade industry.

--Geographically, the Poles are in a difficult dilemma. If they opted out of the Soviet camp, the chances are that the combat would take place on their own turf. The flat Polish plain is like a tunnel to Russia.¹⁰⁶

--In amplification of the geographic dilemma facing the Poles, all the Soviets need at a minimum is access to Polish real estate, without resistance, to effect an attack on NATO. In essence all the Poles would have to do is simply be reliable enough to allow the Soviets the real estate access unopposed.

--There is a traditional threat to Poland from the Germans. Polish fear of the Germans could facilitate cooperation with Soviet desires to launch a Warsaw Pact attack on the Federal Republic of Germany.

--Change (1969) in the Warsaw Pact command structure could be interpreted as granting the East Europeans a greater role in decision making.

--Soviet control over Poland's forces, through "integration" of command, makes it likely that the Poles could "contribute effectively and reliably to at least the initial phases of a Soviet offensive against Western Europe."¹⁰⁷

--Reinforcing the above factor is the premise that the quickness of deployment of Polish troops under the Warsaw Pact banner will increase the probability of their reliability. Early successes also will further enhance it.

--Current Western military analysts have attributed more and more credibility and respect to the Soviet military's adoption and implementation of the Operational Manoeuvre Group as a serious challenge to NATO. The Manoeuvre Group as C.N. Donnelly writes "is not an end in itself, but a tool to assist the rapid advance of the Warsaw Pact main forces and hence achieve a more rapid end to the war."¹⁰⁸ This new Soviet doctrine will enhance Warsaw Pact troop reliability for the short term assault.

--There has been stability in the Polish military elite since 1973.

--The presence of two Soviet divisions in Poland as well as close to twenty in East Germany and four in Czechoslovakia serve to remind the Poles of Soviet dominance.

--The Polish military elite lobbies with their counterparts in the Soviet military to receive new equipment.¹⁰⁹

--The Church's advocacy of non-violence has indirectly strengthened the governing military regime.

X. FACTORS OPPOSING RELIABILITY

The following factors serve to support the premise that the Polish armed forces would be of questionable reliability to the Warsaw Pact.

--The modern officer corps has evolved in Poland at the expense of ideological training, emphasizing highly developed military skills and specialization.¹¹⁰

--The Polish military has partially revived its traditional ethos as the guardian of national Polish interests and has achieved a degree of institutional integrity that violates Leninist conceptions of Party control of the armed forces.¹¹¹ The military now is the dominating factor, rather than the party.

--The modernization of the Polish armed forces and the greater professionalization of the officer corps have created rising professional expectations vis-a-vis the Soviet military. The Soviet military still fails to give Polish strategists credit for contributions to the coalition warfare doctrine. In addition there is dissatisfaction on the part of the Poles for the delay experienced in receiving the most advanced Soviet weapons systems.

--The threat of West German irredentism has faded. The Polish-West German Treaty of December, 1970 gave de facto

recognition by the Federal Republic of Germany to Poland's post-war frontier on the Oder-Neisse Rivers.

--Traditional enemies of the Poles are the Russians and Czechoslovaks as well as Germans.

--The Polish Armed Forces have not entered actual combat outside their homeland. The 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia met no resistance.

--Seventy-three percent of the Polish Army consist of conscripts. These conscripts generally lack commitment to Soviet interests.

--The Polish military elite has evolved into a highly educated force that has demonstrated its moderating influence domestically. It may be difficult for the Soviets to rally these strongly nationalistic elites to fight with Polish troops in a cause that may be solely in the Soviet interest.

--Many of the fifteen divisions of the Polish army are at less than 50 percent of their optimal operational capability.

XI. CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult at best to arrive at a definitive evaluation as to when and where the reliability of the Polish armed forces will be strongest and where it might fail. Weighing the principal factors that may serve as determinants of reliability is a subjective task, but all the determinants in the aggregate will decide whether the Polish armed forces can be relied upon as Warsaw Pact members. Furthermore, in some cases these determinants are time-related and scenario-dependent. Hence attempting to simplify the question any further and arriving at a decision once and for all on their reliability would not accurately represent the nature of the subject. Several conclusions on the subject are, however, worth further consideration as guidelines in evaluating present and future Polish armed forces reliability. These conclusions are as follows:

1. The Polish United Workers Party (the would-be Soviet wedge) has been relegated to a secondary role in government leadership, which may leave the ideological reliability of Poland with the Warsaw Pact countries in some question.

2. With the army as the government, party factional squabbling has become less visible. No civilians are giving conflicting orders to the troops. The army, to date, has obeyed its leaders and probably will continue to do so in

the future. General Jaruzelski and his colleagues seem to have formed a solid senior military officer consensus.

3. The post World War II formation and training of the Polish armed forces has been distinctly pro-Soviet. The philosophy, training and strategy of the Warsaw Pact is firmly fixed in the Polish armed forces.

4. Soviet hegemony in the Eastern Bloc, even in Poland, probably would be successful in a lightening utilization of Polish forces for a limited time.

5. The burden of governing has degraded the readiness of the Polish armed forces. Many of the fifteen divisions of the Army are at less than 50 percent of their optimal operational capability. Furthermore, if war were to break out tomorrow, Poland would not be in a position to send all fifteen divisions outside its borders. Some units would have to stay behind to support the governing regime in various areas.

6. As the situation in the government becomes stable and slowly demilitarizes, the burden of governing on the military institution will lighten. The size and indoctrinated training of forces and the geostrategic location of Poland will probably then contribute to an upward trend in the proficiency of the Polish forces as Warsaw Pact members.

7. The Polish economy, ostensibly weak as it is by Western standards, has not failed in the area of defense

support and therefore seems to have had little negative effect on the Polish armed forces to date.

8. At present even with the many existing arguments against reliability, the Polish armed forces must be ranked second in reliability in the Soviet camp of the Northern tier behind East Germany. In terms of the sheer size, geostrategic importance and training of the Poles it dictates that they must be ranked ahead of Czechoslovakia and members of the Southern Tier.

9. The government situation in Poland is still not totally stable or free from even drastic change. The apparent termination of martial law may spark the start of a return to normalcy, but the situation remains less than entirely predictable. The armed forces about which the present government is centered will no doubt be affected as the situation evolves.

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